

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SSO-00

NSCE-00 ITFE-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

INRE-00 DODE-00 DHA-02 FDRE-00 AID-05 IO-10 /070 W

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O R 121527Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9476

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, CASC, VS, TH

SUBJ: AMCITS ARRIVE ON FIRST FRENCH-SPONSORED FLIGHT FROM
SAIGON TO BANGKOK

1. THE FIRST FRENCH EVACUATION FLIGHT FROM SAIGON ARRIVED IN
BANGKOK APPROXIMATELY 1800 HOURS AUGUST 12. FLIGHT CONSISTED
OF APPROXIMATELY 80 PEOPLE: 55 FRENCH, 3 AMERICANS, AND AN
ASSORTMENT OF OTHER NATIONALITIES.

2. AMERICANS WERE CATHOLIC PRIEST ARAM J. BERARD, KISTNERT
MITCHELL ((NAMED AS LISTED ON PLANE'S MANIFEST), AND JOSEPH
D. HUGHES. LAST MINUTE NOTICE OF ETA TO FRENCH AND THENCE TO
THIS EMBASSY PRECLUDED ARRIVAL AT AIRPORT BEFORE PLANE LANDED.
MITCHELL HAD ALREADY DEPARTED AIRPORT. ACCORDING TO FATHER BERARD,
MITCHELL IS AN EX-US MILITARY, WHO RETURNED TO SAIGON TO LIVE,
IS FROM SANTA MARIA, CALIFORNIA, AND HAS GONE TO STAY WITH
MILITARY FRIENDS IN BANGKOK.

3. HUGHES SAID VERY LITTLE AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE DESIRED
NO EMBASSY ASSISTANCE AT THIS TIME. HE LEFT THE AIRPORT IN THE
COMPANY OF AN AUSTRALIAN.

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4. FATHER BERARD INTENDS TO STAY IN BANGKOK FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE

WEEK PRIOR TO RETURNING TO THE US. REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT INFORM JOE DEVELIN, 393 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, BOSTON, OF HIS ARRIVAL HERE AND PLANS, AND ASK DEVELIN TO NOTIFY APPROPRIATE FAMILY MEMBERS.

5. FATHER BERARD SAID HE HAD LITTLE CONTACT WITH OR KNOWLEDGE OF AMCITS STILL IN SAIGON. HE NOTED THAT MOST AMCITS ARE ON THEIR OWN AND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE CITY. FATHER BERARD DID MENTION KNOWING SLIGHTLY TWO QUAKERS FROM PHILADELPHIA NAMED JULIE (PRESENTLY IN SAIGON) AND TOM (DANANG). HE BELIEVES JULIE INTENDS TO LEAVE ONLY WHEN TOM ARRIVES IN SAIGON, AND TRAVEL FOR FOREIGNERS IS IMPOSSIBLE AT THE MOMENT.

6. AT THE SAME TIME THIS PLANE (ROYAL AIR LAO CARAVELLE) DEPARTED SAIGON, A SECOND LAO PLANE LEFT WITH 45 VIETNAMESE FOR VIENTIANE, ACCORDING TO FATHER BERARD.

7. ACCORDING TO THE PRIEST, THE PRG IS GRANTING EXIT PERMITS TO FOREIGNERS, WHO ARE THEN PLACED ON A WAITING LIST FOR AVAILABLE TRANSPORTATION. PASSENGERS FOR THIS FLIGHT WERE REQUIRED TO PAY A \$1 EXIT FEE AND A \$901 TRANSPORTATION FEE.

8. EMBASSY IS REPORTING BY SEPTTEL FATHER BERARD'S OBSERVATIONS ON POLITICAL SCENE.
WHITEHOUSE

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